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CARCINOMA UNDER THE AGE OF THIRTY

BY

CHARLES GREENE CUMSTON, M.D.

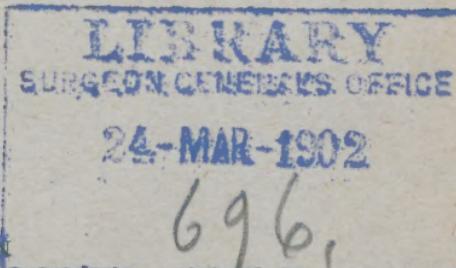
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CARCINOMA UNDER THE AGE OF THIRTY.

BY CHARLES GREENE CUMSTON, M.D., BOSTON.

ALTHOUGH carcinoma, generally speaking, is a disease of middle life, statistics have been able to demonstrate that a certain number of cases occurring in early life certainly do arise, and the object of this paper is to report three cases of this disease occurring in individuals under the age of thirty and to report a few cases gathered from the general medical literature. We have recently received, in reply to our inquiry, a letter from our friend, Dr. von Glasser, in which he has been good enough to compile the following table regarding the ages of 527 patients afflicted with carcinoma and on whom an autopsy was performed at the Pathological Institute of the University of Erlangen from 1862-1893.

Under 20 years of age	.	.	.	1 case	=	0.19%
Between 20 and 30 years of age	:	:	:	16 cases	=	3.30 "
" 30 and 40 "	"	"	:	47 "	=	8.90 "
" 40 and 50 "	"	"	:	105 "	=	19.30 "
" 50 and 60 "	"	"	:	143 "	=	27.10 "
" 60 and 70 "	"	"	:	149 "	=	28.30 "
" 70 and 80 "	"	"	:	58 "	=	11.00 "
" 80 and 90 "	"	"	:	8 "	=	1.50 "

Carcinoma has been rather frequently found afflicting the ovary of young women or even girls, and Ols hausen, in his "Handbuch für Frauenkrankheiten," Vol. II, page 434, relates cases occurring in subjects aged respectively twelve, nineteen, twenty-one, twenty-three and twenty-nine years. Out of 48 cases of carcinoma of the ovary he found 16 in subjects under thirty years of age. Leopold reports cases of carcinoma of

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the ovary in patients aged respectively twelve and one-half, fourteen, seventeen, nineteen and nine months, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-three and twenty-six years, and in another case of a twenty-four-year-old girl the disease was present in both organs.

In a recent book entitled "Études de gynécologie opératoire," by Dr. Phocas, of Lille (Paris, 1899), are to be found five cases of carcinoma of the ovary in children varying in age from seven to fifteen years.

Schroder, on page 341 of his "Lehrbuch der Frauenkrankheiten," gives 83 instances of carcinoma of the uterus under thirty years out of 2,265 cases, and out of 492 cases of carcinoma of the uterus in which an autopsy was performed this same authority found 22 cases in subjects less than thirty years of age. In the Vienna Hospital Reports for 1886, cases of carcinoma uteri occurring in patients aged twenty-one, twenty-four, twenty-five and twenty-eight are reported.

Carcinoma of the breast being an extremely frequent affection, it is interesting to find out how often this occurs in young women. In the London Hospital Reports, Vol. III, will be found the case of a servant girl of twenty years of age, who died at the hospital with a symmetrical carcinoma of the breasts and ovaries. In a statistical table compiled by Bryant, amounting to 600 cases, 25 occurred in subjects under thirty years of age, and Birkett gives 19 cases between the ages of twenty and thirty in the article he has contributed in Holmes's "System of Surgery." Gross collected 642 cases derived from various sources and found that 18 of them occurred between the ages of twenty and thirty. Haycock reports a case of carcinoma in the breast in a single woman twenty-two years old, and Bryant communicated another to Mr. Shield of a young lady of twenty-one from whom he removed

a carcinoma of the breast, and who died a year afterwards from a secondary manifestation of the disease in the lung. Of 64 cases of carcinoma of the breast operated on during the last five years at the surgical clinic of Greifswald, two of the patients were under twenty-six years of age. Professor Le Dentu removed a carcinoma from a young lady of twenty-five years.

Of 51 cases of carcinoma of the testicle reported by Ludlow and Lebert, we find that five were in subjects under five years of age, one in a patient fifteen years old, and in 11 patients the disease developed between twenty and thirty years. It is more than probable that some were instances of sarcoma.

Carcinoma is also a frequent neoplasm of the digestive tract, and the stomach alone contributes about 33 per cent. of all cases of carcinoma. Leber found three per cent. out of 314 cases of cancer of the stomach, Hahn out of 166 cases only two per cent., and Reichert found only three per cent. of these cases occurring in subjects under thirty years of age. In a statistic made at the clinic in Zürich, five cases out of 138 occurred in subjects under thirty years, while another series of 120 cases reported from the clinic in Würzburg gave three instances of this affection in subjects under thirty years of age. Scholtz relates the case of carcinoma of the stomach in a girl aged twenty-two, and Scheffer records another in a boy of fourteen years. Hofmann describes a case of this affection in a twenty-year-old soldier, Reinbrecht that of a twenty-one-year-old girl, Muth one of a twenty-four-year-old man, while Burger gives in a statistic of 357 cases of carcinoma of the stomach, 11 of the patients being under thirty years of age.

As to cases of carcinoma of the intestines occurring in subjects under thirty years of age, a certain number

have been reported from time to time. The youngest that we know of has been reported by Marchand, and was that of a carcinoma of the rectum in a young girl of sixteen, and Mr. Cripps records another instance in a lad of seventeen. Billroth reports three cases of carcinoma of the intestine in patients between eighteen and twenty years old, while Raspe records a case of carcinoma recti in a woman twenty-eight years old. Sihla reports two cases of carcinoma of the intestine in patients under thirty years of age out of 46 cases which were operated on in Dorpat from 1880 to 1888. Schwieder found three cases of carcinoma of the intestine in patients under thirty years of age out of a total of 49 cases. Burger found nine cases under thirty years of age out of 111 autopsies in which carcinoma of the intestine was found. Von Bary has described a case of a patient aged twenty-five, in which a carcinoma developed from an *ulcus durum* on the border of the anus. Out of a total of 126 cases of carcinoma of the rectum observed by Kuster, two patients were under the age of twenty years. Professor Rose operated on a case of carcinoma of the rectum in a subject twenty-six years old, while Professor Socin operated on a female of twenty-seven years for a tumor of the colon, which proved on microscopical examination to be a cylinder-cell carcinoma.

The following table compiled by Dr. Boulogne relative to the age at which carcinoma of the intestine has been found is interesting:

From 1 to 9 years of age	5 cases
" 10 to 19 " "	4 "
" 20 to 29 " "	24 "
" 30 to 39 " "	38 "
" 40 to 49 " "	46 "
" 50 to 59 " "	51 "
" 60 to 69 " "	31 "
" 70 to 79 " "	16 "
" 80 to 89 " "	2 "

Here are a few more cases gathered from the literature and classified according to the location of the neoplasm :

CECUM AND ASCENDING COLON.

- Male, aged 27 years (Morton: *The Lancet*, 1895).
- Female, aged 24 years (Hofmolk: *Wien. med. Presse*, 1885).
- Male, aged 28 years (Tchouprow: *Chirurg. Leitopis*, 1893).
- Female, aged 25 years (Jacobs: *Presse med. Belge*, 1895).
- Female, aged 14 years (Robson: *British Medical Journal*, 1895).
- Male, aged 24 years (McCosh: *Presbyterian Hos. Reports*, 1895).
- Female, aged 29 years (Shield: *British Medical Journal*, 1896).
- Female, aged 29 years (Rolleston and Shield: *Clinical Society Transactions*, vol. xxx).

TRANSVERSE COLON AND FLEXURES.

- Female, aged 29 years (Eiselsberg: *Wien. med. Woch.*, 1895).
- Female, aged 25 years (Laubie and Cactes: *J. med. Bordeaux*, 1898)

SIGMOID FLEXURE.

- Male, aged 28 years (Ferranti: *Riv. clin. di Bologna*, 18*3).

Rose performed an exploratory laparotomy on a subject of twenty-one years ; the growth proved to be a carcinoma of the left kidney, with metastases in the retroperitoneal lymphatic glands. Isreal removed the left kidney for carcinoma in a patient twenty-one years old. In an interesting paper on malignant tumors of the kidney Sutton mentions a case of carcinoma of the kidney in a female twenty-eight years of age. The operation was successful, but the patient died a year later from a recurrence of the neoplasm.

In a recent study entitled, "Carcinome unter dreissig Jahren," Seitz related eight unpublished cases of considerable interest which were under observation at the surgical clinic of the University of Munich. The first was a subject twenty-three years old afflicted with a carcinoma of the rectum ; the second was a patient twenty-three years old who had a carcinoma of the skin in the left dorsal region ; the third was a subject twenty-four years of age, with carcinoma of the rectum ; the fourth, also aged twenty-four, carcinoma of the rec-

tum; the fifth, aged twenty-five, had carcinoma of the liver; the sixth was a twenty-seven-year-old subject who had a epithelioma of the lower lip; case seven, also twenty-seven years of age, had a carcinoma of the pylorus; case eight was a twenty-eight-year-old subject, with carcinoma of the breast.

Dr. Fabre-Domergue, in his recent and splendid treatise on "Les cancers epitheliaux" (Paris, 1898), mentions the case of an inoperable epithelioma of the thigh in a man aged thirty. The primary growth was seated on the anterior aspect of the left thigh, ten centimetres from the groin. It was a flattened fungous mass, having a diameter of ten centimetres and projected above the surrounding skin about three centimetres. The surface was reddish and dimpled, and covered with offensive pus. It had been present for fourteen months. In the corresponding groin a metastasis in the glands had taken place, the secondary tumor being the size of an apple; the skin covering it was red and inflamed. All the lymphatics of this region appeared to be more or less indurated.

Carcinoma of the external genitals in young subjects must be very rare, as I have only been able to find three recorded cases. The first was a young woman of twenty-eight years, who was operated on for a carcinoma of the right labium majorum by Professor Socin, of Basel, in 1890. The second case was a male subject aged twenty-four years, who underwent amputation of the penis for an epithelioma of the organ; this case occurred in the service of Professor Weinlechner, of Vienna. The third case was a man aged thirty, with a carcinoma of the penis, the organ being amputated by Professor Rose at that time in Zürich.

As very rare we may mention the case of a female aged thirty years, who was operated on for an epithe-

lioma of the upper lip in the Vienna General Hospital, and a patient of Professor Rose, aged thirty years, who presented a carcinoma of the tongue and submaxillary gland.

To the cases already mentioned I will relate a little more in detail three that have occurred in my practice within the last four years.

CASE I. Miss X., age nineteen, was kindly referred by Dr. Charles W. Knowlton, of this city. A year previous to our seeing the patient, she had suffered from a typical attack of gall-stone colic, the symptoms presented being pain in the region of the gall-bladder, yellow skin and conjunctiva, clay-colored stools and anorexia. She recovered from this attack after a few weeks of treatment, and although the calculi were searched for in the stools, none had been found.

We saw the patient in a second attack in May, 1897, and made the following notes: The skin and conjunctiva were of deep yellow; thickly coated tongue and almost complete anorexia. Clay-colored stools. Pulse 60 per minute. Pain in the region of the gall-bladder. Palpation revealed the presence of a large globular tumor in the right hypochondriac region, very sensitive to pressure, and, as near as we could ascertain, might have been the size of a grapefruit. A diagnosis of biliary calculi was made, but on account of the very distinct outline of the mass, it appeared to us that some other affection might possibly be present, more particularly perhaps a hydatid cyst of the liver, and before operating Dr. David W. Cheever and Dr. Edgar Garceau kindly saw the patient in consultation and coincided in the diagnosis of gall-stones.

After putting the patient on a course of medical treatment in order to relieve the jaundiced condition,

the patient was prepared for laparotomy, which was done a week or two later. The usual incision parallel with the outer border of the rectus muscle was made, and when the peritoneum was reached the fundus of the gall-bladder was distinctly felt adherent to the serous membrane. The latter was picked up with a rat-tooth forceps and carefully incised to the extent of about four centimetres, and when this opening had been made, it was found that the supposed gall-bladder was adherent over quite an extent to the peritoneum. We carefully separated the organ from the peritoneum all around the edges of our incision into the serous membrane, but as the organ was nicely walled off, we found that packing with gauze would be unnecessary.

The aspirating needle was slowly introduced for about three or four centimetres, but did not come in contact with any stone, and a vigorous use of the aspirator did not result in the withdrawal of any fluid ; several attempts were made, but no gall-stones were encountered by the needle, and nothing but a little dark blood would come away when the latter was withdrawn.

Not understanding the nature of the condition of affairs present, the gall-bladder was separated from the peritoneum, when, to our surprise, in introducing the hand into the peritoneal cavity we found a large mass the size of a fetal head extending from the under surface of the liver and dipping down into the pelvic cavity. Raising up the borders of the abdominal incision with a broad retractor, the cavity was inspected and the gall-bladder was seen in its normal position ; it was very small. The supposed gall-bladder was the greatly hypertrophied liver. The diagnosis of carcinoma of the liver, or more probably adenocarcinoma, was made, and the abdominal wound was

sutured. The patient died shortly after the operation and no autopsy could be obtained.

CASE II. The patient, age twenty-eight years, kindly referred by Dr. Joseph Garland, of Gloucester, Mass. The patient was the mother of two or more children. The last few months she had been complaining of considerable vaginal discharge, which was rather foul-smelling and tinted with blood.

Examination revealed a cauliflower growth on the cervix which invaded the lateral culs-de-sac. The uterus was somewhat enlarged and not very movable. The broad ligaments were considerably infiltrated. No enlargement of the inguinal or supra-clavicular glands. As the disease had extended too far for a radical operation, the growth was freely removed with the scissors and thermocautery. The patient died nine months later from a general metastasis throughout the abdominal viscera. Histological examination of the neoplasm showed it to be epithelioma.

CASE III. A young man, age twenty-four years, applied to the writer, for constipation. He stated that during the last three months he had lost twenty-four pounds. His skin was sallow and his eyes rather sunken. Thoracic organs negative. Palpation of the abdomen revealed the presence of a mass about the size of a lemon in the right iliac region. This growth was painless on pressure. The inguinal glands on the right side were enlarged. Exploratory incision revealed an annular carcinoma of the ascending colon, and the mesentery was actually riddled with secondary lymphatic metastasis. Circular resection of the intestine was done.

The patient died four months later, and histological examination of the intestinal growth showed it to be an ordinary cylinder-cell carcinoma.

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